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Review of the Administrative Office of the DCI (AO/DCI)

Purpose and Method

This review was undertaken to determine whether the existing centralized apparatus for providing administrative support within the DCI Area is still appropriate in view of recent and impending changes in organization and staffing. It was conducted by means of interviews with key personnel of the AO/DCI (Annex A) and representatives of some 10 other offices with whom they deal on a regular basis (Annex B).

Centralization vs. Decentralization of Support

The AO/DCI, as now organized, was established in August 1973 by Mr. Colby, thereby centralizing administrative support within the DCI Area in order to provide the overview, uniformity, and consistent level of support which appeared to be lacking in the previously decentralized system. Of particular concern at the time were the changes that were taking place with respect to the establishment of the IC Staff, the abolishment of ONE, setting up the NIO system, and changes in the immediate Office of the DCI--all of which resulted in sharply increased demands for various kinds of administrative support.

Prior to centralization, the Office of National Estimates had an administrative officer and two clericals involved in administrative duties. The Inspector General had a secretary full-time on administrative support and an auditor about half time in budget work. The General Counsel and Legislative Counsel each had a clerical involved largely full-time in these activities. The O/DCI had three people providing administrative support, and the Comptroller had one person in this activity. Therefore,

25X1A [redacted] were involved in administrative support, at the time, for a DCI Area [redacted]

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Following this centralization of administrative support in 1973, many of the offices in the DCI Area were able to turn most of their administrative duties over to the AO/DCI. Several of the offices involved (OIG, OLC) were happy to be relieved of those functions and to turn the manpower used on administrative items to more substantive tasks.

The NIO's, OLC, and OIG no longer have people spending a major amount of their time on administrative matters. The General Counsel has, at present, a support officer temporarily assigned to help OGC set up a better records system and to aid in personnel problems associated with the recently expanded Table of Organization for that Office. The Comptroller's Office has the equivalent of about one man-year dedicated to administrative functions, under the general supervision of the Special Assistant.

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As presently configured, the AO/DCI has seven positions and provides personnel, logistics, budget and finance, and security support for the DCI Area. Each function (with the exception of logistics) is performed by a careerist from the appropriate DDA office, thus providing specialized expertise in the AO/DCI in various administrative matters.

### Findings

Overall View. In the course of this review, nearly all offices in the DCI Area reported that they have been provided with adequate support and that centralization has worked fairly well. The AO/DCI has been generally effective and responsive to individual office needs insofar as circumstances permit. A number of offices were very laudatory in their comments on the quality of the support. According to most of the DCI Area offices, centralization has resulted, not only in a reduced administrative workload on them, but also in a higher quality of administrative support.

Exceptions to this general view are principally in the Comptroller's Office, which has maintained an independent capability for administrative support--in part, because of its Agency-wide role with respect to resource management, but also because of the long-standing capabilities and strong performance of Comptroller staff personnel in this area. In their view, the AO/DCI mechanism represents an additional administrative layer and a contributing factor to delays in the process of acquiring support for their Office.

Interoffice Communications. There appear to be minor communications problems from time to time when an individual office goes directly to a DDA office for support without informing the AO/DCI, or when the AO/DCI fails to inform the supported office of actions it has taken in its behalf.

In other areas, there does not appear to be enough contact between the supported offices and the AO/DCI during the Program Call exercise. This can result in inadequate program requests and might account at least in part for the excessive reprogramming and unfunded requirements in the DCI Area recently. Also, the offices generally do not feel that they receive sufficient feedback on their budgets. While some offices are content to let the AO/DCI manage their budgets--as long as their needs are met--this is by no means unanimous. Difficulties such as these may be attributable to what we believe is a lack of understanding of the DCI Area offices and the various factors and trends which can affect their current and projected needs.

AO/DCI Workload. No attempt was made to do a position-by-position survey of the AO/DCI as would be conducted, for example, by the Position Management and Control Division (PMCD/OP). But--in view of the services provided to the seven offices of the DCI Area in the areas of personnel, travel, logistics, security, budget and finance--the total of seven positions (four professionals and three clericals) does not seem to be at all excessive. In fact, it is considerably smaller than the support staff which is now planned for the IC Staff.

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Several AO/DCI officers talked about large increases in their workload resulting from the rapid growth of the DCI Area and an inordinate increase in paperwork. Even with the separation of the IC Staff, the size of the DCI Area in 1977 and in 1978 will be about what it was in 1976, due to the addition of the Requirements and Evaluation Staff in this Office and significant increases in the Office of the Director, Inspector General, Legislative Counsel, General Counsel, and EEO. This heavy paper workload is cited as hindering their ability to better determine office needs for the long and short term. In particular, in the budget and finance area, a large workload and inadequate help are blamed for an inability to take "the big picture look," to assist offices more in long-range planning, and to keep them fully informed on resource matters which affect them. As of October 1976, the Agency's new General Accounting System (GAS) is to become operational for the processing of financial obligations. The paperwork involved in preparing travel orders and the obligation documents, which is a large part of the present AO/DCI Budget Officer's workload, should henceforth diminish due to the elimination of the requirement for a separate form for the travel order. Secretaries in DCI Area offices will now fill out most of the new form, with the Budget Officer in the AO/DCI adding certain information.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

To the extent that centralization of administrative support has been implemented throughout the DCI Area (perhaps 90 percent) during the past three years, it has been reasonably successful--especially considering the growth and upheaval of this period. Certainly a return to a decentralized approach would be less satisfactory in terms of the resources required throughout the DCI Area, the quality and evenhandedness of service, and the need for an overview or buffer between these components and the DDA offices. But some fine-tuning of the mechanism might be very beneficial at this point in terms of minimizing the problems outlined above. It is therefore recommended that:

- (1) there be more direct contact between DCI Area offices and the AO/DCI, particularly during the development of the Program and Budgets;
- (2) DCI Area offices be encouraged to review their budgets and, if at all possible, regular financial status reports should be provided to them;
- (3) arrangements be made for new assignees to the AO/DCI to be thoroughly briefed on the DCI Area offices for whom they will be providing support; and
- (4) DCI Area offices be encouraged to take maximum advantage of AO/DCI services and expertise and to keep the AO/DCI informed of administrative contacts requiring follow-up action or coordination within the DCI Area or with the DDA. This

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will also allow the AO/DCI to provide appropriate documentation and authorizations where necessary, thus eliminating potential delays. In this connection, the AO/DCI should work with the offices in defining the services which they can perform for themselves in order to keep AO/DCI from simply being a typing pool for routine requests. A large amount of its time is spent typing and processing forms which the supported offices could do themselves, thereby enabling AO/DCI officers to better utilize their expertise.

One final recommendation relates to an AO/DCI request for an extra position in support of the Budget and Finance (B&F) officer. We believe that any decision on this matter should be deferred until we have had some experience with the operation of the GAS system (i.e., 2-3 months perhaps). Then, if this augmentation is still felt to be necessary, a special PMCD survey should be requested to determine what the B&F position requirements are at that time. Because of the importance and inherent difficulty of planning and projecting needs in the DCI Area, we feel that the level of position(s) and the personnel provided are just as significant as the number allocated.

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